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Pacific Pact Hopes

Acheson's Statement

Washington, Feb. 21.
The Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Acheson, said today in formal talks with friendly governments on the possibility of joint defence arrangements in the Pacific.
In reporting this to a news conference, he said "aggression in Korea and other parts of the Far East, give the area more than its share of the danger spots."
Mr. Acheson, in answer to questions, said the American government is very sympathetic to a co-operative aid programme now being worked out by Southeast Asian nations at Colombo, Ceylon. It will do its best to fit American aid programmes in the area into any overall pattern which results from these talks.
VITALLY CONCERNED
In a statement discussing a possible Pacific pact, Mr. Acheson said he expects current informal talks with nations in the area "will continue and that many proposals for increased co-operation will be considered."
Mr. Acheson did not say who was conducting the talks or where they are being held. However, Mr. John Foster Dulles, his special advisor, is now in New Zealand, and has been talking about a possible defence pact in a tour of the Pacific.
Mr. Acheson's statement said: "It is impossible at this time to say what plans or proposals can be agreed upon or whether in fact, any proposal will find ultimate general acceptance."
He emphasised, however, the United States is "vitally concerned" in the security of the Pacific, and added:
"Whatever method can be found, our objectives and those of our friends remain the same—the nations of the Pacific area, free from fear of aggression and the threat of encroachment on their sovereignty and independence."—Associated Press.

Seagrave Appeal Hearing

Rangoon, Feb. 21.
The Burmese High Court completed hearings today on American Dr. Gordon Seagrave's appeal against a six-year prison sentence for treason. The decision is expected next week.—United Press.

COMMENT OF THE DAY

Pacific Pact Proposals

AUSTRALIA has been one of the strongest proponents of a Pacific Pact based on the North Atlantic alliance and latest reports from Washington suggest that the United States are willing to start the ball rolling toward that objective. It is a matter of some curiosity that first enthusiastic reactions come not from Australia but from New Zealand, giving the impression that Australia feels wary about the plan envisaged by America. Washington's conception of a Pacific Pact appears to be a cautious and gradual evolution from a three-nation alliance into an organisation that will include all of the Far East nations which are free of Communist control. Theoretically this is quite a sound method of creating a close-knit alliance. But it automatically introduces the controversial subject of Japan. Japan would eventually have to be invited to become a partner in the pact, recognition of which arouses Australia's prejudices and suspicions as to the extent Japan would then proceed to rearm herself. The fact that Mr. John Foster Dulles has introduced into his talks with the Australian and New Zealand governments the subject of a three-way alliance simultaneously with discussions on American proposals for a Japanese peace treaty broadly hints that Washington considers the subjects complementary. Australia does not appear to be ready to go as far as that at the moment. While desiring some assurance of protection against Communist aggression in the South Pacific, she is obviously reluctant to have Japan as an equal partner in any defence alliance aimed at guaranteeing that

protection. Australia is thus confronted with a dilemma and it is one which the Opposition at Canberra intend to exploit to the full, as Dr. Evatt made very obvious in his public statement on a Japanese peace treaty this week. Aside from the role which the United States may have in mind for Japan in relation to a Pacific alliance, the whole merits of a regional pact affecting the Far East have to be considered by its sponsors and principal collaborators. To some extent regional pacts undermine the United Nations as a world organisation created for the maintenance of peace and security everywhere. Regional defence pacts, even though they may be effected within the framework of the United Nations do, in fact, compromise the authority of UN. The supreme difficulty is for the United Nations to be able to combat aggression wherever it occurs when that aggression is being directed and controlled by one of its most influential members—Soviet Russia. It is on this ground that the Western Powers, led by the United States, justify their creation of regional alliances, claiming fairly that they represent the basic principles of the UN Charter and UN's declared objectives and are, in consequence, the best practical way of fulfilling one of the United Nations' prime responsibilities—the building up of adequate defences against aggression, no matter from where it may come. If, therefore, a Pacific Pact does materialise, it will have the backing of the Free World because its objective will be identical to that of the peace-loving members of the United Nations.

Experiment Failed

Philadelphia, Feb. 21.
A woman whose blood stream was channelled into a kidney taken from the body of a traffic accident victim, died here on Wednesday eight hours after the unprecedented experiment to purify her blood and save her life.
The ill-fated experiment failed shortly after noon.
The kidney was removed from the body of Wayne H. Deveney, 30, of York, Pa., who was killed before 4 a.m.
Less than an hour later, the blood of the woman patient, identified by hospital doctors as Mrs. Richard Irvine, 32, of Philadelphia, was flowing through the borrowed kidney.
Doctors said the auxiliary kidney would have been effective—had she lived—until her bloodstream was rid of impurities and her own kidney able to function normally again.—Associated Press.

Bus Passengers Burned

Tokyo, Feb. 21.
Reels of motion picture film carried by a passenger burst into flames on a motor bus in Obu village, in Ibaraki Prefecture, today, inflicting burns on 25 passengers.
A cigarette held close to the bundle of films was believed to have caused the accident.—Reuter.

British Jet Bomber Establishes Record

Gander, Newfoundland, Feb. 21.
A twin-jet British Canberra bomber, racing the sun across the Atlantic, streaked to a landing here at 1.55 p.m., local time (5.25 p.m. GMT, or 1.25 a.m. Hongkong time), completing a 2,000-mile flight in four hours and 40 minutes.
It was the fastest crossing of the Atlantic in history.

The jet bomber lost its Britain-to-Canada race with the sun. It missed the sun's time by 70 minutes, but it was a history-making flight in several respects.

It was the first time the Atlantic has been flown by a jet plane of any type without refuelling en route.
It takes the sun approximately three and a half hours to travel the same distance. (There is three and a half hours between GMT and Newfoundland time.)
Members of the crew had little to say after landing except: "Lead us to the coffee."
The pilot, Squadron Leader A. E. Callard, said he planned an overnight stay at Gander for a maintenance check.
Plans are to take the plane to Andrews Field, near Washington.

Later it will be studied by United States technicians as part of the armaments exchange of information between the United States, Britain and Canada.

CREW CONGRATULATED

After the landing in Gander, the British Air Secretary, Mr. Arthur Henderson, messaged

Latest ECA Allocations

Washington, Feb. 21.
The Economic Co-operation Administration has allocated \$1,500,000 for United States and Canadian armaments shipments: Indo-China \$344,000 for Indian textile products, United States industrial chemicals and scientific and professional instruments and apparatus, and supplies from Japan, Hongkong, Indonesia, Burma, Thailand, Formosa, the Philippines and India.—Associated Press.

Prison For Ex-British Officer

Graz, Feb. 21.
Neville MacVey Napier, sentenced to nine years imprisonment Wednesday for collecting and selling military information to a Czechoslovak spy, will spend his gaoi term in an Austrian cell.

British authorities said the former British officer will serve his sentence in Klagenfurt Gaoi where several cells are reserved for British civilians. The gaoi is under Austrian supervision and administration.

Napier, 32, took his conviction and sentence quietly although there were tears in his eyes. His 43-year-old wife, who broke down in the court room on his conviction, crying: "I have nobody more in the world," left the courtroom before he was sentenced.

"It is simply horrible," the red-haired ex-Countess said to reporters who told her of the sentence as she waited in a hall-way. "I have lost everything—my two children, my first husband, the Count, and now my second husband is gone. What shall I live for? I do not have any money. I cannot see my family. I cannot live with my brother."

Napier's counsel, Mr. Michael Spence, said he would decide Thursday whether to file a petition for review of the trial by a British reviewing board in Vienna. Napier has also the right to appeal to the King.

THREE CONVICTIONS

The former Royal Artillery officer was sentenced to one year on a charge of obtaining information for purposes inconsistent with the interests of the British Empire and one year on a charge of endeavouring to obtain the information.

He received seven years for conveying information to Franz Reicher, 25-year-old Austrian, who admits he spied for Czechoslovakia, and paid Napier 1,400 Austrian shillings (£25) for the information. Napier's prison term will run consecutively.

Reicher and five alleged conspirators in an espionage network in Austria face trial here Thursday on charges similar to Napier's. The maximum penalty is death.

British authorities, meanwhile, announced that a British non-commissioned officer and three other Austrians have been arrested in Carinthia. Another British spy province in Austria is suspected with a possible second Czech spy ring.—Associated Press.

Heavy Toll Of Vietminhese

Saigon, Feb. 21.
French infantry, supported by small naval craft, attacked fortifications of the Communist Vietminh Nationalists today near Thabinh, 60 miles south-east of Hanoi. Heavy losses were inflicted on the Vietminh, a communiqué said.

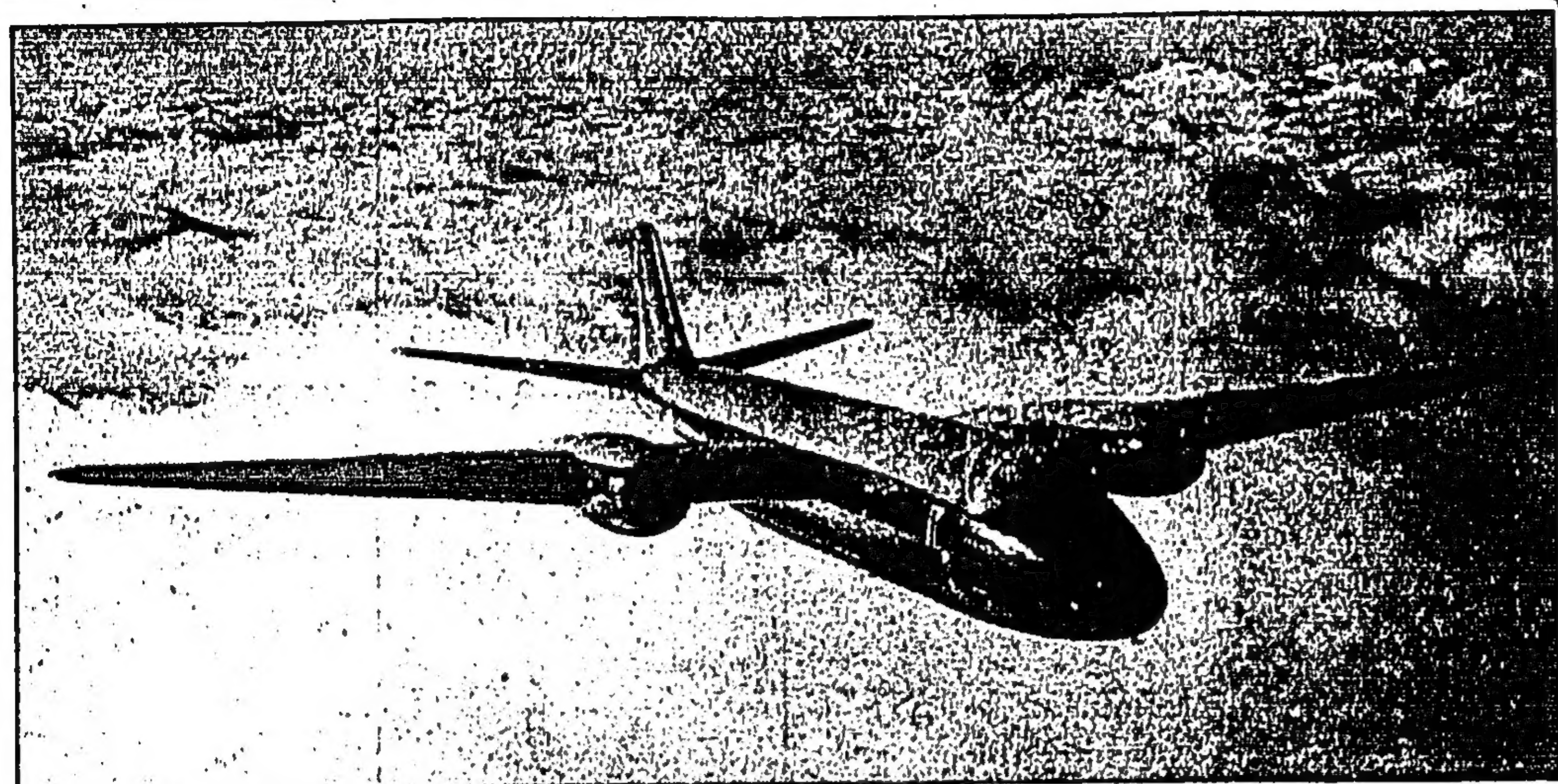
Important enemy fortifications were destroyed and 427 Vietminh troops were killed or wounded, the communiqué reported.

New American arms in important quantities will arrive in Saigon soon to bolster the French and Vietnam land, sea and air forces, US Minister Donald Heath announced.

Mr. Heath arrived today after spending three weeks in Washington conferring with US government officials. He said the US would step up the flow of arms to the French and the French-supported Vietnamese government here for a determined effort to defeat the Vietminh.—Associated Press.

Railway Go Slow Continues

London, Feb. 21.
Railway officials said today union leaders spent a third day in conference, today without having found an agreement which will end a "make or slow" and strike movement.
All over the country railwaymen, incensed by a wage offer which they regard as inadequate, continued to "go slow" in actual rail operation. There were more strikes in the protest.—Reuter.



Allies Make 5 1/2 Mile Gains In New Strike ACTION ALONG 60-MILE FRONT

Tokyo, Feb. 22.
A communiqué issued by Gen. MacArthur's headquarters today said the combined United Nations ground and air forces striking against the Reds along a 60-mile front in central Korea advanced four to five and a half miles.
The communiqué said, "Combined UN air and ground forces struck out against the enemy all along the 60 miles of the central Korean front, registering advances of up to 10,000 yards on the Hoengsong area. Other spearheads pushed forward as much as four miles in the Wonju-Chechon area against resistance that was characterised as light to moderate. In the eastern and western sectors aggressive patrols drove forward in an effort to contact enemy forces."

The communiqué added that the UN air force, including planes of the US Fifth Air Force, the Royal Australian and South African air forces, Navy air task forces and land-based Marines, mounted over 400 sorties in bad weather to strike vehicles, gun emplacements, supply and fuel dumps and troop concentrations with rockets, napalm and machinegun fire in central and northern Korea.

Okinawa-based medium bombers of the Far East Air Forces dropped 140 tons of bombs through heavy clouds on military targets at Hamhung, while other bombers through breaks in the overcast attacked railroad bridges north of Hamhung with 20 tons of bombs.

The communiqué said that cargo aircraft continued the transportation of supplies and ammunition to forward positions.

Naval forces employed along both coasts continued with patrol and general support operations. Military targets in the Wonsan area were bombarded for the eighth straight day by east coast fleet

HK Ban On Oil Shipments

London, Feb. 21.
Britain announced today she is taking steps to prevent further shipments of oil from Hongkong to China.

Colonial Secretary James Griffiths told the House of Commons there have been no shipments since the first of October, last year, except for 308 barrels in December. This was to repay a loan made by the Chinese. Communist authorities to a British salvage vessel, he said.

Britain has been under attack recently in the United States because of the continuing trade between Hongkong and the mainland.—Associated Press.

HUSH-HUSH TALKS ON RUBBER

Carefully Worded Communiqué

London, Feb. 21.
A hush-hush inter-governmental conference on world rubber problems wound up its first phase on Thursday still wrapped in secrecy.

A brief communiqué said findings of the 10-nation meeting, which includes Britain, the United States and Britain's Commonwealth countries as a separate group, have been forwarded for study to the governments involved.

"It has reviewed the present and prospective supply-demand position of natural and synthetic rubber," and has discussed various forms of international action which might be called for in the light of this review," it said.

Informed sources here speculated that one of the conference's topics has been the feasibility of imposing an embargo on shipments of the war-vital material to Russia and her friends, including China.

Another proposal likely to emerge, financial sources said, is one for allocation of rubber supplies. Opened on Feb. 5, the conference will now recess for a few weeks.

The British government recently has been under sharp attack in the House of Commons for continuing her shipments of Malayan rubber to Communist China. She has replied that this source is not considered, so far as a critical war material and as long as the demand from Communist nations remains normal, she does not plan to interrupt shipments.—Associated Press.

Uniformed Pirates In Japan Sea

Tokyo, Feb. 21.
Pirates wearing the uniforms of the former Japanese Imperial Navy are preying on fishing boats operating in the Japan Sea, according to the Kyodo news agency today.
The crew of a fishing vessel, the 37-ton No. 5 Nagato Maru, returned to Shimomoseki on Feb. 17 after being stripped of their catch and fishing gear by pirates who had stopped their boat by shelling it.—Reuter.



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